

THE VOICE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NATIONAL GUARD - SUMMER 2008

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**MG Schwartz takes
command of
JFHQ-DC**



275th Outside the Wire

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It's a family affair. Maj. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz, new Commanding General of the DCNG, and his family, from left, son Duane, wife Norma, daughter Shauna and son Jason.

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275th outside the wire. Left, Capt. Derek Demby, 275th Military Police Company commander, stands with two Iraqi police officers during the unit's tour of duty in Bayji. Members of the 275th returned home in May after almost a year of service to the welcoming arms of family and friends. Story on page 4.

Summer 2008

Commander's Column

The District of Columbia National Guard remains dedicated to the service of our country, both here and abroad. As *Capital Guardians*, we are contributing to three distinct missions: *Fighting the Global War on Terror by providing troops to support Operations Iraqi Freedom, Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom; maintaining a ready and relevant force to protect our nation and its borders through Homeland Security and interstate relationships; and providing community support through emergency management, disaster relief support, youth programs and support to the District of Columbia and the surrounding metropolitan areas.*

The past and present success of this command in supporting these various missions can be directly attributed to the diverse experience of the men and women in the D.C. National Guard. Not only are our personnel proficient in their military specialties, but they also bring an array of skills from their civilian employment, which is essential to mission success. Our organization consists of flexible and multi-talented citizen soldiers and Airmen who not only provide an essential service to the community, but are a vital part of that community.

We have recently experienced several successes, including federal recognition of the 33rd Civil Support Team, the 275th Military Police Company's homecoming

from Operation Iraqi Freedom, graduation of district youth from our DEFY and Youth Challenge Academy as well as several successful counter-drug operations. As your new Commanding General, I pledge my commitment to the continued success of this organization, and I thank all of you for

your hard work and the sacrifices. I am proud to say that I am a District of Columbia National Guardsman, the *Capital Guardians*, who diligently defend our nation.

In talking about the D.C. National Guard, I can't say enough about the importance of our members' families. Without their support, we could not do our jobs. It is often said that when a service member deploys, their families deploy with them. While loved ones are away performing military duties, families endure hardships here at home. From missed childhood moments to managing the



Maj. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz
Commanding General



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household, family members take on a range of duties and responsibilities during a service member's absence. The continued commitment of our family members is critical to our successes. I give you my wholehearted thanks for your continued support of your *Capital Guardians*.

When we welcomed home the 275th Military Police Co. after a year of duty from D.C. to Mississippi to Iraq, our joy was tempered with remembrance of our fallen comrades. Only nine days into their Iraqi tour we lost Sgt. First Class Robert Towns, whose Humvee was struck by an explosive device. We experienced another serious loss when First Lt. Russell Kaufman was shot by a sniper. We can only be grateful he has the fortitude to be recovering from his wounds. Though undermanned, the 275th performed outstandingly well, providing support to about a dozen Iraqi police stations, many more than most American MP companies in Iraq.

As Capt. Demby and others in the 275th have said, they could not have accomplished their mission without the support they received from those of us who stayed behind. Troop Command, the Family Support Office and many personnel including Col. Cecelia Flores, Maj. Anthony Jackson and Capt. Yolanda Lee made sure the 275th got the support they needed. Our troops knew they were not forgotten. We in the DCNG are indeed a family.

We have had several significant changes in leadership recently throughout the D.C. National Guard, including the retirement of Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley, my boss and mentor these past years. On the Air side of the house, Brig. Gen. Richard J. Prosek retired May 31 from his post as Deputy Adjutant General-Air. He was replaced by Brig Gen. Linda K. McTague, formerly 113th Wing commander. Replacing her as wing commander is Col. Jeff Johnson, former vice wing commander and a longtime member of the 113th Wing. Col. Marc Sasseville replaced Johnson as the vice wing commander. We will remember Gen. Prosek's calm demeanor and commitment to our core values. He had a knack for quickly assessing the facts in any given situation and bringing solutions to the table. His leadership was instrumental in making our newly formed Joint Force Headquarters a reality.

Gen. McTague is no less capable when it comes to strong leadership and solid counsel. Her capabilities at JFHQ-DC will be felt on both the Air and Army side of the house. She is a strong addition to the team.

Cols. Johnson and Sasseville have some

significant challenges at the wing as they prepare for the upcoming Operational Readiness Inspection, which was delayed until next year because of damage to their aircraft during a recent storm. I'm proud of the way many DCNG soldiers have stepped up to assist the wing in preparing for the inspection.

On the Army Guard side of the house, Col. Art Hinaman became commander of Troop Command, replacing Col. Cecelia Flores, who has assumed the duty of deputy chief of staff.

Maj. Gen. Wherley will be missed by many, including myself. But he has prepared us for the future, and I am more than confident of everyone in the DCNG. We have a bright future ahead.

One of the significant challenges we anticipate is retention and recruiting. The DCNG must stem the net losses from our units or we will lose force structure. Both Army and Air are making exerted efforts to attract and keep good people. Each of us has a role to play. I challenge each person to provide at least one referral over the next year. By doing so, we can bolster the numbers in our units and remain strong for our nation and our communities.

Thank you for all you do to keep this nation and our community strong. You are true patriots, and I am proud to serve with each and every one of you. ★



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275TH MILITARY POLICE RETURNS FROM IRAQ



Maj. Gen. Errol Schwartz welcomes Maj. Roland Lane as the 275th Military Police Co. returns from its deployment to Iraq.

By First Lt. Chris Mitchell

715th Public Affairs Detachment Commander

WASHINGTON – The 275th Military Police Company from Washington, D.C., returned May 16 from its deployment to Iraq.

The unit arrived at Camp Shelby, Miss., and was met by officials from the D.C.

National Guard community, including Maj. Gen. Errol Schwartz, Vice Chief of Staff Col. Cecilia Flores, 372nd Military Police Battalion Commander Maj. Anthony Jackson and 74th Troop



First Lt. Russell Kaufmann stands at the observation post with an overview of city of Bayji, Iraq. He was critically injured during the deployment when he was shot in the neck by a sniper.

Command Commander Col. Arthur Hinaman.

Flores praised the men and women of the 275th for their sacrifices and professionalism during their tour in Iraq.

"It's their bravery and commitment to service that ensures our freedoms," Flores said. "I was amazed at the energy level they had upon their return."

In October, the 275th deployed just over 100 troops to the Bayji area of Iraq, some 100 miles south of Mosul, in the Sunni Triangle. Their primary mission was to train Iraqi police in all aspects of police work, to include logistics, training, accountability and operations. Over the course of the unit's seven-month deployment, the soldiers conducted more than 1,000

combat patrols alongside some 700 of their Iraqi police counterparts, said First Lt. Stephen Sykes, a platoon leader with the 275th.

The 275th provided guidance to as many as 14 police stations. Sykes said the unit before them only covered two stations.

"The troops were outstanding," Sykes said. "They did the mission every day, both inside and outside the wire. They picked up where the last company left off, and raised the bar for the next company."

Soldiers involved in the deployment said the transition once they arrived in Iraq was difficult. The 275th lost one of their own when Sgt. First Class

(Continued on next page)





372nd Military Police Battalion Commander Maj. Anthony Jackson and 275th Military Police Co. Commander Capt. Derek Demby discuss the returning units travel itinerary as the 275th prepares to return to Washington, D.C., after a seven-month deployment to Iraq.

The importance of community relations is remembered, as Sgt. Hassan Jones and Staff Sgt. Alton Lane pose for a photo with the local village children.



Robin L. Towns was killed during combat operations just nine days after the unit arrived in Iraq.

But after the first two months, things in the unit's area of operations steadily improved. Staff Sgt. Michion Lewis said things were hard when the unit first arrived, but by the end of their tour, the Iraqi police were able to conduct many operations on their own. She takes pride in the tasks the 275th accomplished, especially with an undersized unit.

"Our biggest contribution is that we were able to spread ourselves out over the Sunni Triangle," Lewis said, noting that the 275th did the job of three or four platoons with just two. ★



Vice Chief of Staff Col. Cecilia Flores presents a member of the Individual Ready Reserve with a Freedom Salute package. Twenty-nine soldiers from the IRR and 21 from the Puerto Rican National Guard joined the 275th Military Police Co. during its Iraq deployment.



First Lt. Sykes and Sgt. White – first squad leader served their duty at Iraqi Police District Headquarters – Joint Service Station, Bayji, Iraq.



All Company Commanders assigned to AO Bulldog, Sal Ad Din Province, takes a Kodak moment during a visit by the top Commander Gen. David H. Petraeus.

What happens next: 275th after deployment

By First Lt. Loneshia Reed

Deputy State Public Affairs Officer

Now that the ceremonies are over, the news media has gone, and family and friends have had the opportunity to give that long awaited “welcome back,” what is next for the soldiers of the 275th Military Police Company?

Most soldiers earned at least 30 days of leave upon their return from a year-long deployment, and planned to use it wisely. Sgt. William McLaughlin, member of 1st Platoon 275th MP Co., is no different.

“I accumulated a total of 84 days of leave because of other active duty service,” he said. “I plan on taking a well-needed vacation.”

Life after deployment, however, is about much more than just relaxing after a job well done. National Guard soldiers have a variety of issues to contend with upon their return, ranging from financial worries and integration into the civilian populous to combat injuries and even death.

According to Mr. James Conover, family readiness counselor for the District of Columbia National Guard, the most important things soldiers have to worry about during integration back into society are pacing themselves and developing a plan.

“They need to determine where they are now in life, where they want to be, plan it out, and if they run into glitches along the way, they have to be willing to reach out for help,” Conover said. “All soldiers will deal with feelings of isolation, withdrawal, changed eating habits and anxiety upon their return home from a war zone. It is when these things begin to interfere with their daily life that help is needed.”

Amidst all of the welcome back celebrations and feelings of jubilee, it is important for all of us to remember the awesome sacrifice our soldiers have made, understand the enormous task of re-integration and keep a vigilant eye on those soldiers that may be in need. ★




Al Zewieaa, Iraq, Police Station received 20 AK47 rifles that were refurbished by Sgt. First Class Bradley Baxter.

Photo: Lt. Col. Kevin McAndrews



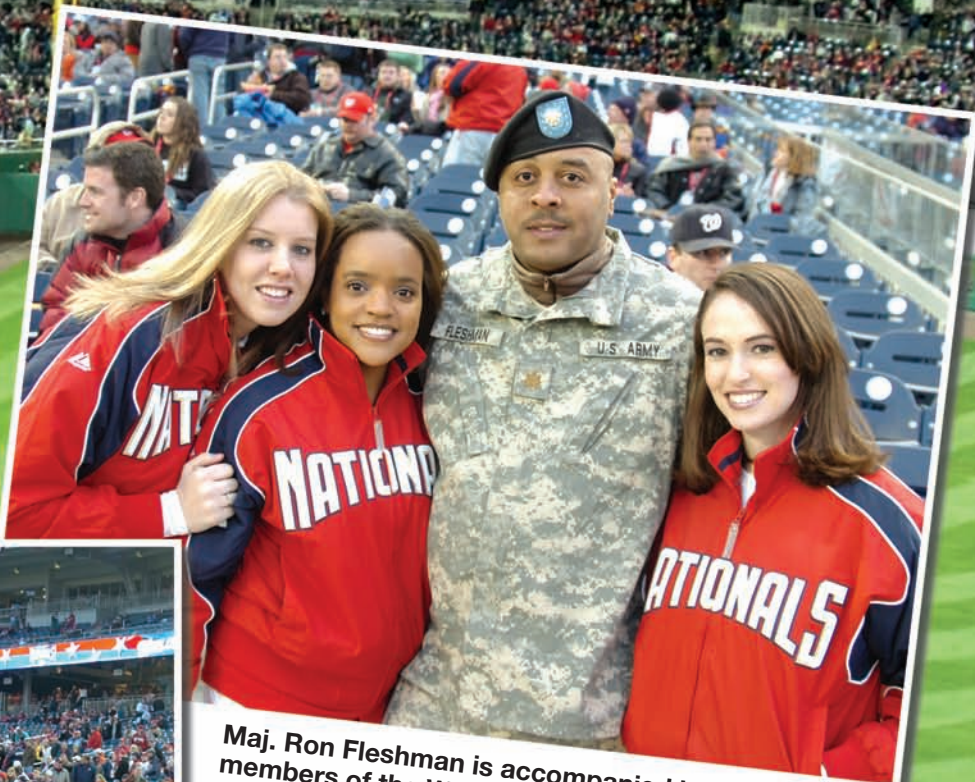
The new Nationals Park stadium lights up the sky which begins a new era for the Washington Nationals ball club.



President George W. Bush waves to the crowd as he prepares to throw out the first pitch of the ball game at new Nationals Park stadium.



Master Sgt. Dan Porter proudly displays his Nationals Park Inaugural Game program. The game was played on March 30, 2008. The new stadium displays an impressive design and layout that features an array of great seats for fans.



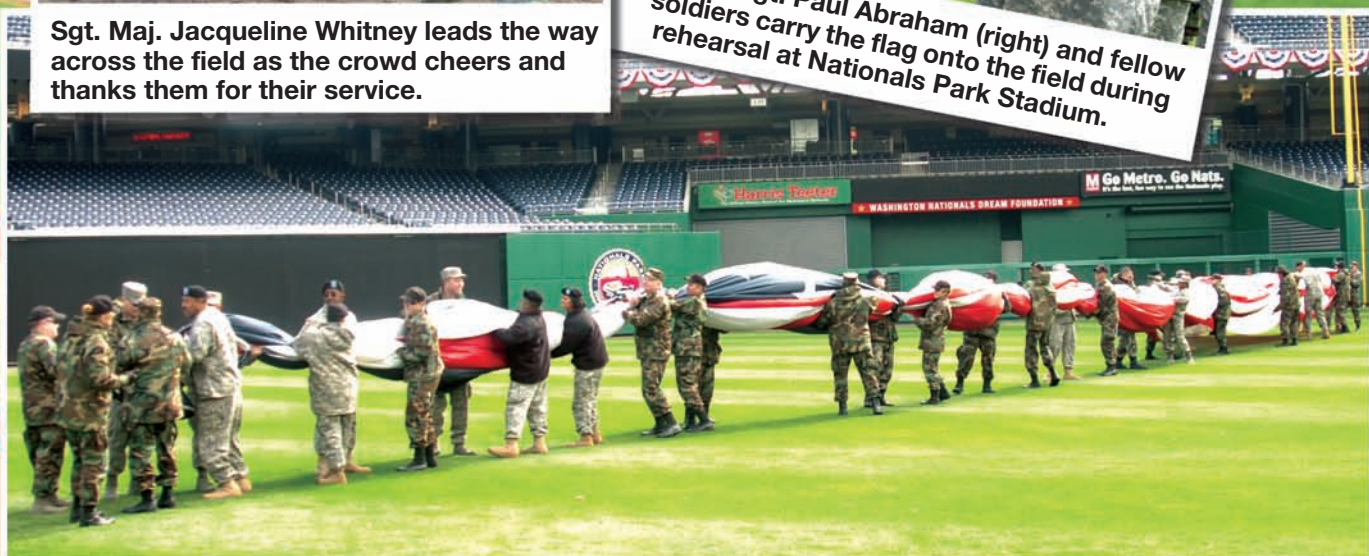
Maj. Ron Fleshman is accompanied by three members of the Washington Nationals "Nat Pak" who also participated in the opening ceremony.



Sgt. Maj. Jacqueline Whitney leads the way across the field as the crowd cheers and thanks them for their service.



Master Sgt. Paul Abraham (right) and fellow soldiers carry the flag onto the field during rehearsal at Nationals Park Stadium.



The long line of more than 100 soldiers and Airmen were prepared to unfurl the giant-sized American flag.

Increasing collaboration among Caribbean



The DCNG 547th Transportation Company Motor Pool sits ready to roll.

547th Transportation Company keeps Tradewinds gusting

Story and photos by
Officer Candidate Robert T. Albrecht
JFHQ-DC Staff Writer

Members of the District of Columbia 547th Transportation Company provided vital supply and personnel transport for operation Tradewinds. Organized by the United States Southern Command and hosted through several training sites within the Dominican Republic, Operation Tradewinds pulled together more than 440 soldiers from 18 partner nations in a joint operation designed to increase collaboration between Caribbean nations.

Running Feb. 9 through April 18, the 547th acted as the sole “wheels on ground” transportation company for the entire Tradewinds Operation. Located under the logistical command of the 166th Regional Support Group based out of Puerto Rico, D.C. National Guard soldiers found themselves working alongside other American military personnel, including Marine and Coast Guard units and their foreign national counterparts. Tasked with moving personnel and equipment among three training sites (Las Calderas, 1st Brigade training site and San Isidro Air Force Base),



Sgt. Navaro and Spc. Moody from the 547th Transportation Company find a small issue during a routine technical inspection.

the wheels of the 547th logged 11,354 miles, carried 649 passengers and conducted 50 missions.

With several parallels to their recent deployment in Iraq, many soldiers of the 547th valued the realistic nature of the missions they were tasked to perform. “The mission here is the same mission we would be doing in Iraq,” said acting First Sergeant, Sgt. First Class Mark Ditty. “This is a good AT for us, we go out and provide support, this is what we do, convoys.”

Along with this real-world parallel of transporting soldiers to and from missions and training sites, the commander of the 547th brought up another similarity with her unit’s time in Iraq.

“Communication was our biggest challenge, there is definitely a language barrier,” said First Lt. Hyo Cho during a post exercise interview.

With more than 18 partner nations and lessons learned

nations – Operation Tradewinds

from previous Tradewinds Operations, language barriers and translation services have become one of the primary missions of the 166th Regional Support Group based out of Puerto Rico. With a bilingual command, the 166th was perfectly positioned to facilitate coordination with translation services between the training nations and local hosts.

“Every vehicle that leaves this base goes through me and has a translator on board; most of those translators are from the 166th,” remarked Sgt. First Class Rivera, the 166th NCOIC for operations at Las Calderas Naval Base.

And since, according to Sgt. First Class Evans, who deployed with the 547th, “the convoys are what this mission is all about,” the translators aboard those convoys played a significant role in allowing the 547th to properly execute their missions.

Soldiers began redeployment prep by conducting complete technical inspections of their two Humvees, two tractors, 12 five-ton vehicles and their sole wrecker. After completing all transportation missions, each tactical vehicle was thoroughly inspected with no class three leaks, power washed and drained to just one-fourth of their fuel capacity to be cleared by USDA inspectors for shipment back home.

With their attention to detail, commitment to hit their starting points and the praise of OIC Col. John Block, who coined the 547th as “true transportation warriors,”



Pvt. Richard Johnson performs a technical inspection on a 5-Ton. Pvt. Johnson is three months into a reenlistment after a 20 year break in service.

members of this battle-tested unit were given two short liberties between their tightly run operations to enjoy the local scenery and oceanfront that has made the Dominican Republic famous.

Soldiers of the 547th were able to unwind and come together to celebrate a job well done and another mission accomplished during a half-day barbecue and a send-off dinner after a job well done. ★



A DCNG 547th Transportation Company five-ton with desert camo passes its technical inspection.

Mobilization Augmentation Command (MAC)

The MAC is a class act

Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt. Lorenzo Parnell

JFHQ-DC Public Affairs Specialist

Twelve members of the D.C. National Guard Mobilization Augmentation Command (MAC) Plans and Policy Division participated in a six-day mock hearing exercise designed to equip War College students with the skills and abilities to testify before Congress.

Col. Dominic Archibald, commander of the MAC, explained the significance of the unit and the various duties they perform on a daily basis.

"We are a brigade-level Army unit with four divisions including Plans and Operations, Department of the Army Operations, Army National Guard Operations and Joint Service Division," Archibald said. "Our mission is to provide surge capabilities and support to specific operational centers in the Military District of Washington, the Pentagon and the National Capital Region on a continued basis."

The MAC participants instructed War College students on the do's and don'ts of testifying before Congress. They used actual congressional hearings as the template for their question-and-answer session, concentrating on relevant, real-world topics. These topics included terrorist attacks, hurricane response, proper use of resources and mission readiness.

The MAC Plans and Operations Division has been invited to conduct this portion of the training over the last four years because of the expertise and level of experience they bring to the exercise.

Most of the students were operational officers. Due to operations tempo of today's deployed forces, training was focused on making strategic decisions.

The MAC Plans and Operations Division is the hub for



this portion of the exercise. They plan and run the exercise in support of the U.S. Army War College. Additionally, the team coordinated with congressmen on board to participate in the exercise via teleconference.

The mock congressional hearings are the culminating point, or in this case, the final exam, to the War College students' education.

Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley Jr., former Commanding General of the D.C. National Guard said, "I visited the MAC and their operation at the Army War College. I was very impressed by the detailed preparations and realistic testimony scenarios developed by the MAC to train our future leaders of the Army."

"This is a good mission for the D.C. National Guard because of our location in the National Capital Region," Wherley said. ★



113th Wing hero takes action

Capital Guardian lives up to the name, rescues toddler after carjacking

By Staff Sgt. Gigail "Gail" Cureton

715th Public Affairs Detachment, D.C. ARNG

The simple task of running an errand turned into a few anxious moments for a Maryland family on March 26. But thanks to the quick actions of a D.C. Guardsman, a toddler is safe.

According to Prince George's County Police, a woman was pumping gas into her car at a Temple Hills, Md., gas station when two men jumped in and drove off, ripping the gas pump from the car. The carjackers sped away with the woman's 2-year-old nephew in the backseat.

"I was on my way home from work," Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Lamar Elliott said. "I had just picked up my son from daycare. I pulled over to let this speeding car pass me, saw the handle of the gas cap sticking out and saw a Marine Corps sticker. A Marine would never do that."

Tech. Sgt. Elliott said he had a feeling the car was stolen.

Elliott, an aircraft maintainer with the 113th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, immediately called 911 and followed the green Pontiac for more than a mile. On a quiet residential street, the carjackers jumped out of the car, hopped into another vehicle and sped away.

Elliott called the police again with the location of the abandoned car, when he saw a toddler sitting quietly in his car seat.

"He came right to me but wouldn't talk when I asked him his name," Elliott said.

Minutes later a police vehicle pulled up with the aunt in tow. After a brief conversation with the aunt, Elliott completed his police statement and was on his way home.

"When you wear the uniform, it is a part of your job to assist those in need," he said. "We have an obligation to help. My reward comes from knowing that the child was not harmed and is back with his family."

For his efforts, Elliott was honored by the Prince George's County Police Department in an April 30 ceremony. ★



Good Samaritan – Staff Sgt. Lamar Elliott of the 113th Wing Aircraft Maintenance Squadron receives the Good Samaritan Award for his heroic act of saving a child during a carjacking. County Executive Jack Johnson congratulates him on behalf of all the citizens in Prince George's County, Md.

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UNITED CONCORDIA

Maj. Gen. Schwartz takes command of DCNG

Units say goodbye to Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley

By Staff Sgt. Gail Cureton

715th Public Affairs Detachment

Approximately 3,000 officers, soldiers and airmen of the District of Columbia National Guard welcomed a new Commanding General during a change of command ceremony at the D.C. Armory on July 19. Air National Guard Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley Jr. ceremoniously passed command of the D.C. National Guard Joint Force Headquarters to Maj. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz.

In front of the troops he will command and a large group of family, friends and well-wishers to include the Honorable Eleanor Holmes-Norton, at large Representative to Congress for the District of Columbia and Robert W. Rodriguez, principal deputy assistant secretary of the Army for manpower and reserve affairs,



Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley passes the JFHQ-DC flag to Command Sgt. Maj. Calvin Williams during a Change of Command ceremony at the Armory July 19.

Schwartz expressed his commitment to continuing to build on the successes of the D.C. National Guard and the men and women who have dedicated their lives to serve in uniform.

"I'm looking forward to moving ahead with this command and taking us to new levels," Schwartz said. "We will continue to work hard on those things to include meeting with government officials, many of whom were here today. We are in a unique part of the country – the nation's Capital – and the D.C. National Guard has the opportunity to make a difference."

July was a very busy month for Schwartz. Not only did he assume command of the only National Guard unit that the president can activate during natural and civil emergencies, he was also promoted to his present rank on July 9 by Secretary of the Army Pete Geren at the Pentagon.

Schwartz enlisted in the District of Columbia Army National Guard in 1976. He was commissioned in June 1979, and appointed a platoon leader in the 104th Maintenance Company.

He served in numerous leadership positions as a staff officer and as a commander.

Some of his previous assignments include Battalion Commander, 372nd Military Police Battalion; Deputy Director of Information Management, Director of Logistics, Commander, 74th Troop Command; and Deputy Commanding General, District of Columbia National Guard. In June 2003, he assumed duties as The Adjutant General, Joint Force Headquarters and Commander of the District of Columbia Army National Guard.

The general is a graduate of the University of the District of Columbia, Central Michigan University and the National Defense University.

At his last opportunity to address the Capital Guardians he has lead since July 2003, Maj. Gen. Wherley said that his command of the D.C. National Guard was the most rewarding experience of his life and that he was very proud to have served as its leader. ★

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DCNG Takes On Strength Management

The D.C. Army National Guard has begun to engage in a comprehensive Strength Management Campaign Plan called Guardian 1,500+. The overarching objective is to increase the end strength of the *Capital Guardians* to a level above 1,500 strong, before Sept. 30, 2009.

This plan was developed as a result of adopting “best practices” from the top three states in the country.

The plan, commonly referred to as “Guardian 1500,” is a command-based plan and is designed to leverage support from the various internal and external programs of which other states are currently taking substantial advantage. The programs include, but are not limited to, the integration of the Family Readiness Group and Employer Support to

Guard and Reserve together as formal partners. The plan also includes a process for leveraging G-RAP and Every Soldier is a Recruiter in order to substantially increase the number of contacts made as soldiers reach out to their many communities, while providing them a method for becoming independent contractors and substantially increasing their salary with the \$2,000 stipend they receive per accession.

The successful execution of this plan will be both rewarding and career enhancing. Everyone’s support will definitely help the D.C. National Guard become a stronger and more viable organization. ★

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Capital Spear: Civil Support Team participates in multi-state exercise



Photo by TSgt. Parnell

The 33rd's Survey Team simulates extracting a patient from a contaminated area.

The District of Columbia National Guard's 33rd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team (CST) participated in a multi-state exercise that included CSTs from Delaware, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Virginia and West Virginia in and around the nation's capital.

Capital Spear, the three-day exercise conducted March 4-6, began with a multi-state response to simulated, synchronized terrorist events around Washington, D.C., and northwest of Indianapolis.

Officials said the purpose of this exercise was to enhance the interoperability of the participating civil support teams.

Tech. Sgt. Chris Bolt and three other members of the Maryland National Guard's 32nd CST stood in their full chemical gear deep inside the Navy's display ship *Berry* during a training exercise at the Washington Navy Yard.

Straining their eyes to see in the dim light below the decommissioned destroyer's main deck, they bumped between air ducts and steam pipes to study a suitcase-sized device and some white powder scattered in the cramped space.

"We have a positive hit for ricin! I repeat. We have a positive hit for ricin!" Bolt yelled.

The message was repeated over the radio. It was followed by a knocking noise from a nearby passageway.

The 32nd CST was responding to one of several simulated terrorists events in the National Capital Region as part of Exercise Capital Spear.

A Navy ship is not a typical place where you would find one of the National Guard's highly-trained CSTs, which investigate sites for chemical, biological and radiological agents and advises civilian responders. But then, nothing is typical about training for terrorist threats.

Members of civil support teams are trained to deal

with weapons of mass destruction and they are prepared to support their governors during domestic emergencies.

Bolt said the ricin scenario on the *Berry* provided realistic training for what could be encountered at any moment in the real world. Ricin, a biological weapon, is a poisonous protein that can be found in the castor bean.

The discovery of ricin at a Las Vegas motel by Nevada's CST was one of the deadliest substances ever discovered by a Guard CST.

"In the exercise, we received a call from the incident commander at this location," said 2nd Lt. Michael Kesh, survey team leader, on the ship's gangway. "Eight Boy Scouts had spent their weekend on the gangway. Four of the Scouts went to a hospital with symptoms including weakness, vomiting, nausea and tightness in their chests. The 32nd CST was sent to check out the ship."

"We sent an entry team down. They have done some presumptive analysis and found the potential for a biological weapon," said Kesh.

"We have a large maritime threat with the Port of Baltimore, so we have done a lot of training with the Coast Guard," said Kesh.

There is currently one CST in each U.S. state and territory. Some states have, or will soon have, two teams. The teams are similar in their equipment and WMD training, but they are unique in the way governors might ask them to respond.

A standard CST has 22 full-time Army and Air Guard members, but Kesh said the Maryland CST has a maritime strike team that can deploy four survey members with a medic and a communications expert to quickly assist civilian agencies without sending in the entire team with all of its equipment.

"It's something we are still experimenting with and seeing what works for us and what doesn't," Kesh said.

Noticeably different here were the standard charcoal chemical warfare suits the team wore as opposed to the vinyl "Robbie the Robot" self-contained protective suits that they usually operate in.

"We will typically wear the "JLIST" suit here as opposed to the "Saratoga" suit because of the confined spaces, the slip and tip hazards and the snags and tears. We don't want to risk ripping our suits," said Kesh.

The team also used re-breathing systems instead of self-contained breathing apparatus, and they deployed by driving a single communication van, leaving the team's high-tech analysis lab and other vehicles behind.

Civil support teams participating in Capital Spear coordinated through joint operation centers at the DC Armory and in Northern Virginia. The multi-state exercises are held every year with the CSTs. ★

Tuskegee airmen focus for DCNG African-American celebration

By Lt. Col. Kevin McAndrews

State Public Affairs Officer



Roger F. Cram was the featured speaker for the observance of Black History Month in the armory. He gave a captivating lecture on the history of the Tuskegee airmen.

Tuskegee airmen were African-American men who wanted to

fly fighters during World War II. Despite incredible opposition, they were determined to fly fighter missions during one of the most important conflicts our nation has ever faced.

At that time, many people did not believe African-Americans could fly fighters. They also believed African-Americans were inferior, according to Cram. So when the men from Tuskegee, Ala., signed up to be pilots, the leadership in the U.S. Army made it difficult for them to get their wings.

They were put through flight school together, and some failed, Cram said. But instead of graduating those who passed, they decided they would all have to be put through training a second time. This time a few more failed, but the majority passed again, according to Cram. They were put through training a third time when all other pilots in the U.S. Army would have been put through training once and sent to the war. After the third time through, the Tuskegee airmen earned their wings.

The Army thought they would give up, but they didn't,

and they were eventually sent to Africa to fight, to do what they had dreamed of, flying fighter jets, Cram said. The main fight was in Europe, but they were kept out of the battle there. Instead they had to fly missions where they shot at German convoys, at vehicles while flying at hundreds of miles per hour. Instead of considering this impossible, they became even better at shooting their targets.

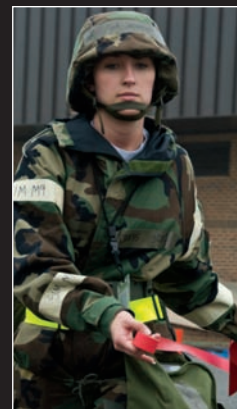
When they finally made it to Europe to fight, they had three times more training than the ordinary American fighter pilot and were the best shots in the entire Allied force, Cram explained. Their mission was to protect bomber planes making raids in Germany. They were so good that American bomber crews, some of whom were prejudiced against African-Americans, prayed they would see the red tails on their escorts, the mark of the Tuskegee airmen. They knew if they were protected by the Tuskegee airmen they would be safe. And indeed they were. They were the only fighter unit in World War II that never lost a bomber to enemy fire over Europe, Cram said.

Each time they faced an obstacle, the Tuskegee airmen overcame it. They fought for freedoms that we have today that they themselves did not have in the South where they lived, which was segregated at the time. African-Americans could not eat in the same restaurants as whites, or go to the same schools, or get into the same colleges. But in the end, instead of being bitter and hateful about this injustice, they banded together and overcame the obstacles, and that only made them better for it. In fact, it made them the best. ★

Cram is the Director of Special Projects at Hiram College in Ohio. He researched the famed Tuskegee airmen, the first black U.S. military pilots in our nation's history. His course contains 16 skills and techniques used by other world heroes that resolve conflict peacefully. By overcoming our obstacles we only become better.



Operational Readiness Exercise



Norton holds forum on women serving in Iraq, Afghanistan



In honor of Women's History Month, U.S. Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton held a forum on Capitol Hill featuring women who serve in the D.C. National Guard who

have been deployed to Iraq.

Three women from the DCNG spoke during the forum. They were Capt. Gladys R. Lanier, chaplain; Capt. Yolanda Lee, 372nd Military Police Battalion; and Spec. Tekeshia A. Allen.

During the forum in the Rayburn House Office Building April 21, Norton said it is important to break the silence on women in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Women are a sizable and indispensable part of today's armed services," Norton said. "Yet we know little of them and even less of their experience in this lengthy shooting war."

Each of the women said their experience was the same as most soldiers, male or female, serving in Iraq. Issues discussed included caring for children, coping with post traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, and other mental health issues related to the war experience, and seeking treatment.

"Today Afghanistan has heated up, Iraq is seeing more violence and U.S. forces are engaged in unilateral strikes in Pakistan," Norton said. "I can think of no better way to celebrate American women this year than by hearing directly from women who have been on the front lines."

One of the issues facing all soldiers, male and female, is seeking treatment for PTSD or other psychological issues. Some soldiers are concerned they may jeopardize their security clearance by seeking help from mental health professionals, creating a Catch-22 situation: They may need and want help, but do not seek it for fear of losing their military job, many of which require having a security clearance. ★

Federal Court judge brings home message during Women's History Month at the Armory

The Honorable Wanda Keyes Heard, associate judge of the 8th Judicial Circuit of Maryland, in Baltimore City County, was the featured speaker during the DCNG's observance of Women's History Month in March. She gave a powerful and stirring speech to an audience gathered March 28 in the Commanding General's conference room.

The judge said a seminal moment came in her life at the early age of 10. The boys in her neighborhood were gathering for a race around the block, she remembers, and she wanted to race. She told her father that she wanted to run but could not because the race was only for boys.

"Well then, you've already lost the race," he replied.

That was enough to stir her into the competition.

"I didn't win, but I didn't come in last," she recalled. "I remember the shackles of inequality were lifted off of me at that moment. If I wanted to be something, if I wanted to make something of my life, I might have to run and I might be the only woman in the race."

When she was young, she wanted to be a fighter pilot and fight for her country. It wasn't until later that she realized at that time, women were not allowed in combat. As she grew older, her ambition changed. She wanted to be like Perry Mason, to be a lawyer, and received her law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1982.

Practicing law for more than 24 years, her remarkable career includes serving as an assistant U.S. attorney, assistant attorney general for Maryland, and assistant federal defender.

"I see possibility, I cross bridges, because I learned to run," she said, recalling the few words of her father that changed her life. "How little it takes to inspire excellence, to inspire those to excellence who have never been asked for the best." ★



Photo: Tech Sgt. Lorenzo Farnell

The Voices of Africa, an a cappella and percussion ensemble, perform in the Commanding General's Conference Room at the Armory in observance of Women's History Month.

Operation Jump Start

121st Air Ambulance Company supports border mission in New Mexico

Story and photo by Spc. DeLicha Germany
715th Public Affairs Detachment



The District of Columbia National Guard participated in Operation Jump Start (OJS), a mission where National Guardsmen from across the nation were deployed to the US/Mexico border to support security, enhance safety and help control illegal immigration.

The missions of OJS included enforcement of border security and construction of a border fence as an effort to help the U.S. Customs and Border Protection contain and regulate the number of undocumented aliens trying to cross into the United States illegally, as well as to help reduce the amount of drug trafficking.

Since the start of OJS, the U.S. Border Patrol and the National Guard have confiscated 296 pounds of cocaine and 7,278 pounds of marijuana, arrested 6,216 people and built miles of 15-foot fence along the New Mexico/Mexico border.

The DCNG mission has been to assist with troop transport by flying National Guard soldiers from various states to and from the border. From the Forward Operating Base (FOB) *Border Wolf* to the border the ride by ground is approximately two hours each way while the helicopter ride only takes about 30 minutes.

"It feels good to be able to help the troops out," says Staff Sgt. Michael Quinones of the D.C. National Guard's 121st Air Ambulance unit. "It's a nice change of environment. Feels good knowing you're supporting a real world mission."

Sgt. Quinones, along with Spc. Jon Eisenbraun, Pfc. Darin Sampson, Sgt. Stephen Adams, Sgt. Richard Sellner, Sgt. First Class Ronald Robinson, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Timothy Faulk, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Chris Rindal and First Lt. Florian Heither were commanded by Lt. Col. Maureen Bellamy. The overall mission was two months long in sets of two week rotations.

The 121st Air Ambulance unit has been supporting the

mission in groups of approximately 10 soldiers per rotation.

"It has been great supporting the Arkansas National Guard. It's different from back home and it's good training for us," said Heither, a pilot for the 121st Air Ambulance unit, who was part of the second rotation during the DC ARNG deployment to OJS.

Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley, former Commanding General of the DCNG, and Col. Arthur Hinaman, commander of the 74th Troop Command, visited FOB *Border Wolf* where the soldiers were stationed.

Almost all 50 states and U.S. territories, along with D.C., have helped in Operation Jump Start. In addition, Gen. Wherley and Col. Hinaman were flown along the border and shown the fence being built to help reduce illegal immigrant crossings and drug trafficking.

According to OJS soldiers, the fence is only a tool. Guard troops are still developing infrastructure.

The National Guard troops that monitor the border use the cameras, sensors and sky boxes. These devices help keep an eye on the traffic at the border. Illegal aliens were cutting through existing fences that were previously in place or driving straight through them.

The new fence is stronger and higher. The fence helps slow down traffic and gives border patrol agents a better chance to catch aliens and drug smugglers. It also helps prevent criminals from returning to Mexico to avoid capture. The improved infrastructure, including fences and access roads, have helped the Border Patrol seize millions of dollars worth of drugs and stem the flow of illegal aliens.

Border violence is increasing as drug cartels attempt to continue trafficking.

Operation Jump Start ended in June. The Border Patrol has recruited thousands of new agents during OJS's two-year mission.

However, National Guard aviation will still lend a hand and the partnership will continue. ★

State Partnership Program

Jamaica Defense Force NCOs take the lead



(Left to right) Sgt. Crump, Capt. Escherich, Cpl. Foster (center), Sgt. Allen, Cpl. Wauchope, Lt. McFarland, and Capt. Averett.

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Lorenzo Parnell

JFHQ-DC Public Affairs Specialist

The District of Columbia National Guard (DCNG) conducted its first State Partnership Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE) with the Jamaica Defense Force (JDF) Jan. 11-15 in Washington, D.C. The purpose of this SMEE was to observe military procedures within the aviation career field. The main areas of concentration were aircraft maintenance, quality assurance, safety and hazardous materials handling. There were several areas of interest for the JDF to visit and apply their knowledge and expertise during the visit.

The team, consisting of four JDF non-commissioned officers and First Lt. Terry McFarland, traditional commander of activities, was able to explore aviation assets at the 121st Aviation Unit, Fort Belvoir, Va.; 201st Airlift Squadron, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.; and the Eastern Army National Guard Aviation Training School, Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.

"The importance of these types of exchanges to both JDF and the DCNG is to learn from each other various procedures and formats in which we can use to improve our ways of operating," said Capt. Donald Averett, State Partnership Program manager.

According to Sgt. Sydney Crump, a 19 year veteran of the JDF, the most significant information as a technical storeman clerk and aviation instructor to relay back to his command would be the format in which our aviation mechanics utilized our tool control process.

"I was very impressed with each area having its own tools to work with," said Crump.

The doors of communication with the JDF and the DCNG aviation career fields were open for exploring new opportunities and sharing unique ways of maintaining aircraft, safety and quality assurance measures. Some of the procedures observed were safety aspects, tool control

systems and special areas of the engine shops. These were all key components the JDF team members were able to analyze to determine if these procedures could be implemented into the JDF tool control system.

"One thing that I really liked was aircraft parts were not stockpiled with everything," said Sgt. Anthony Allen, JDF aviation technician. "The supply room is stocked with only frequently used parts and the unit exchanges obsolete parts for updated parts."

According to Cpl. Carol Foster, JDF crew chief, this State Partnership Program SMEE has been a very positive experience. The JDF Air Wing has the latest Del Aircraft and capabilities similar to the aviation units they had the opportunity to observe.

"What I admire most about the SMEE is learning how critical the crew chiefs are about the number of hours they have worked," said Foster. "If a crew member exceeds the maximum hours allowed to work then it's a safety violation."

Safety is the number one priority of the aviation community, and as the JDF observed the procedures used to control hazardous materials, they noted several processes they would like to implement in their own safety program. One example of these safety measures included the extinguishing and decontamination of flames during a possible battery explosion. Another included the ventilation systems used while charging batteries.

The JDF attributes much of their success with safety to the close working relationships they have with each other, and the understanding of the precautions that must be taken to insure safety and quality assurance.

"We are very thankful we had the opportunity to visit and share ideas that could benefit our aviation unit," said Sgt. Crump. "I am pleased with the results of our visit." More exchanges are planned in the future. ★

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